

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DAR ES 00718 021732Z

62

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-11 ISO-00 SAM-01 AID-05 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01

PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 ARA-06 /088 W

----- 090942

R 021130Z MAR 76

FM AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 0859

INFO AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

USMISSION NATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L DAR ES SALAAM 0718

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY

E.O.11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, AO, RH, WA

SUBJECT: VIEWS OF SEAN MAC BRIDE

REF: LONDON 2828

1. SUMMARY: DURING INFORMAL "TEA" WITH AMBASSADOR
FEB 28, NAMIBIAN HIGH COMMISSIONER MACBRIDE REITERATED
HIS DESIRE FOR OAU SPONSORED NEUTRALIZATION OF ANGOLA AND
NAMIBIA TO PREVENT SOVIET ESTABLISHMENT OF BASES THERE. HE
DOUBTED THAT CUBAN FORCES IN AFRICA WOULD GO INTO NAMIBIA FOR
TIME BEING, AND SAID KAUNDA ON VERGE OF ABANDONING HIS PRESENT
RHODESIAN POLICY IN ORDER EMERGE AS STRONG EXPONENT OF VIOLENT
STRUGGLE THERE. END SUMMARY.

2. IN COURSE OF INFORMAL THREE HOUR "TEA" FEB 28 WITH AMBASSADOR
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PAGE 02 DAR ES 00718 021732Z

AND EMBASSY POLOFF, NAMIBIAN HIGH COMMISSIONER SEAN MACBRIDE

OUTLINED AT LENGTH HIS VIEWS ON NAMIBIA, ANGOLA, AND RHODESIA.
MOST WAS FAMILIAR, BUT FOLLOWING ITEMS MAY BE OF INTEREST.

3. NEUTRALIZATION: MACBRIDE SAID HE WANTED USG UNDERSTAND CLEARLY HIS POSITION ON NEUTRALIZATION OF ANGOLA AND NAMIBIA. IN FIRST PLACE, HE DID NOT WANT TO BE UNDERSTOOD AS SAYING THAT US HAD PLANS TO ESTABLISH BASES IN ANGOLA OR NAMIBIA, BUT ONLY THAT SOVIETS MIGHT THINK WE DID ON BASIS OF BIERMANN VISIT, NATO CONTACTS WITH SOUTH AFRICA, ETC. IN ORDER FORESTALL SOVIETS FROM SEEKING TO TAKE PRE-EMPTIVE ACTION HE THEREFORE WANTED TO NEUTRALIZE AREA, AND THOUGHT THAT OAU RPT OAU SPONSORED AGREEMENT UNDER WHICH NAMIBIA AND ANGOLA WOULD AGREE NOT TO ALLOW ANY FOREIGN BASES WOULD BE BEST WAY TO DO THIS. HE SAID HE WAS NOT THINKING OF UN SPONSORSHIP FOR NEUTRALIZATION. WHEN ASKED IF HE HAD TRIED THIS IDEA ON PRES NYERERE (WHOM HE HAD SEEN PREVIOUS DAY), AND WHAT REACTION WAS, MACBRIDE EVADED DIRECT REPLY BUT LEFT IMPRESSION THAT NYERERE'S RESPONSE WAS AT MOST MODESTLY POSITIVE.

4. CUBANS IN AFRICA: MACBRIDE NOTED HAVANA PRESS REPORT ACCORDING WHICH CASTRO HAD PROMISED THAT CUBAN FORCES IN AFRICA WOULD BE AVAILABLE TO HELP LIBERATE RHODESIA OR NAMIBIA IF ASKED BY RESPECTIVE LIBERATION MOVEMENTS. HE SAID SO FAR AS HE KNEW SWAPO HAD NOT ASKED FOR CUBAN INTERVENTION, AND HE EXPECTED THAT FOR TIME BEING CUBANS WOULD CONTENT THEMSELVES WITH ENSURING THAT SOUTH AFRICANS COMPLETELY EVACUATED ANGOLA. HOWEVER, CUBAN OFFER WAS OBVIOUSLY TEMPTING, AND IT WOULD BE UNREALISTIC TO EXPECT AFRICANS LIVING UNDER SOUTH AFRICAN OR RHODESIAN MINORITY RULE TO BE INFLUENCED BY FEARS OF COMMUNIST TAKEOVER.

5. NAMIBIA: MACBRIDE SAID HE BELIEVED SOUTH AFRICA RECOGNIZED IT COULD NOT AFFORD TO INCLUDE NAMIBIA WITHIN ITS DEFENSE PERIMETER, NAD THEREFORE WAS RESIGNED TO LEAVING NAMIBIA EVENTUALLY. THE KEY TO NEGOTIATED SETTLEMENT AT THE MOMENT IS TO ENSURE THAT SWAPO ADHERES TO ITS PRESENT AGREEMENT TO ACCEPT UN SPONSORED ELECTIONS IN NAMIBIA, RATHER THAN DEMANDING THAT FULL POWER SIMPLY BE TURNED OVER TO IT. SUCH A TURNOVER, A LA MOZAMBIQUE, WOULD UNDOUBTEDLY BE TEMPTING, AND MACBRIDE BELIEVES SOVIETS AND CUBANS ARE ENCOURAGING SWAPO TO MAKE SUCH A DEMAND. SOUTH AFRICA SHOULD PROMPTLY BEGIN NEGOTIATING DIRECTLY WITH SWAPO; DIRECT
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PAGE 03 DAR ES 00718 021732Z

NEGOTIATIONS, WITH SUBSEQUENT UN RATIFICATIONS, WOULD BE MUCH BETTER THAN FOR SOUTH AFRICANS TO TRY TO DEAL FIRST WITH UN OR -- AS THEY APPARENTLY WOULD PREFER -- WITH OAU.

6. IF THINGS GO WELL IN NAMIBIA, MACBRIDE WOULD INVISAGE, AND ASK FOR, EIGHTEEN MONTH TRANSITION BETWEEN TIME SOUTH AFRICANS AGREED TO ELECTIONS CALLED FOR BY JANUARY UNSC RESOLUTION, AND ELECTIONS THEMSELVES, TO PERMIT ORGANIZATION OF PARTIES,

AND ANOTHER 6-12 MONTHS WHILE CONSTITUTENT ASSEMBLY CHOSEN IN ELECTIONS WORKED ON NAMIBIAN CONSTITUTION. ONE IMPORTANT PURPOSE OF THIS LENGTHY TRANSITION, IN ADDITION TO ALLOWING TIME FOR TRAINING OF NAMIBIAN CADRES, WOULD BE TO GIVE GERMAN SETTLERS IN NAMIBIA TIME TO READ HANDWRITING ON THE WALL AND PULL OUT. OTHERWISE, MACBRIDE FEARS FOR THEIR SAFETY.

7. RHODESIA: MACBRIDE BELIEVES ZAMBIAN PRES KAUNDA IS ON VERGE OF MAKING MAJOR REVERSAL IN HIS APPROACH TO RHODESIAN QUESTION AND WILL COME OUT AS ACTIVIST BACKER OF VIOLENT STRUGGLE. THIS WOULD HELP RESTORE KAUNDA'S CREDENTIALS, TARNISHED BY THE ANGOLAN AFFAIR, WITH AFRICA AND LIBERATION MOVEMENTS. MACBRIDE EXPRESSED HOPE THAT USG WOULD CONTINUE TO SUPPORT KAUNDA ANYWAY, AS HIS FALL WOULD BE A DISASTER FOR AFRICA. (MACBRIDE LISTED KAUNDA, NYERERE, SENGHOR, AND "POSSIBLY" HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY AS THE KEY AFRICAN LEADERS WITH REAL UNDERSTANDING OF AFRICAN PROBLEMS.)

8. COMMENTING ON LORD GREENHILL VISIT TO SALISBURY, MACBRIDE SAID HE THOUGHT HMG WAS PRIMARILY TRYING TO MAKE PRO-AFRICAN NOISES, RATHER THAN SEEKING TO ENGINEER A GRACEFUL WAY OUT FOR SMITH. HE THOUGHT PRESENCE ON DELEGATION OF TOM MCNALLY AS WATCHDOG OVER GREENHILL WAS INDICATIVE OF THIS.

9. MACBRIDE SAID HE WAS CONVINCED RHODESAIN SITUATION WOULD BE RESOLVED BEFORE THAT OF NAMIBIA, AND BY MISTURE OF VIOLENCE AND NEGOTIATION. SMITH WAS A TOUGH AND DIFFICULT MAN, BUT IN LAST ANALYSIS SOUTH AFRICANS WOULD NOT INTERVENE MILITARILY TO SAVE HIM.

10. COMMENT: LEAVING ASIDE HIS OBVIOUS PREDILECTION FOR CONSPIRATORIAL THEORIES, MACBRIDE GAVE GENERAL IMPRESSION OF MODERATION AND GOOD SENSE. WE DID BEST TO STRAIGHTEN HIM
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PAGE 04 DAR ES 00718 021732Z

OUT ON US, NATO, AND SOUTH AFRICA AND HE SEEMED EAGER TO EXPLAIN AND BACKTRACK FROM HIS EARLIER CONVERSATIONS (REFTEL).
SPAIN

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: POLITICAL SETTLEMENT, PERSONAL OPINION, NAMIBIA, NEUTRALISM
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 02 MAR 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: CunninFX
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976DARES00718
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D760079-0921
From: DAR ES SALAAM
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t197603105/aaaadoqe.tel
Line Count: 158
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION AF
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 76 LONDON 2828
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: CunninFX
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 20 APR 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <20 APR 2004 by ElyME>; APPROVED <28 JUL 2004 by CunninFX>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: VIEWS OF SEAN MAC BRIDE
TAGS: PFOR, AO, RH, WA, XY, (KAUNDA, KENNETH DAVID), (MACBRIDE, SEAN)
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006